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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1762

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DHAKA

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

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DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR NEA/PAB - MRS. OAKLEY; THE HAGUE ALSO FOR A-DAM AND R-DAM.

E.O. 12356: DECL: MAY 17, 1988

TAGS: ASEC, MOPS, PINS, PINR, PROP, MCPA, US, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT: MAY 9 - MAY 16, 1983

REF: KABUL 0769

1. (C.-ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. ALL OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MAY BE USED IN BRIEFING THE PRESS, PROTECTING SOURCES WHERE INDICATED.

3. SUMMARY: KABUL REMAINED RELATIVELY CALM DURING THE SECOND WEEK OF MAY THOUGH THERE WERE SEVERAL ASSASSINATIONS AND SHOOTINGS. BY MID-WEEK, THE REGIME MANAGED TO RESTORE MORE NORMAL LEVELS OF ELECTRICITY, AND THE SUPPLY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES INCREASED WITH THE REOPENING OF THE HIGHWAY THROUGH THE KABUL GORGE.

4. THOUGH AERIAL BOMBARDMENT OF THE SHOMALI REGION NORTH OF KABUL APPEARS TO HAVE CEASED AROUND MAY 12, VILLAGES CONTINUE TO COME UNDER SPORADIC ARTILLERY AND TANK FIRE. ACCORDING TO LOCAL RESIDENTS, MANY VILLAGES AND TOWNS HAVE BEEN FLATTENED AND CIVILIAN CASUALTIES ARE HIGH. TRAVELLERS THROUGH THE AREA REPORT THAT SOVIET SOLDIERS ARE SELLING LOOTED GOODS ALONG THE ROADSIDE.

5. UNLIKE MOST OF AFGHANISTAN'S PROVINCIAL CAPITALS, THE EASTERN TOWN OF JALALABAD REMAINS RELATIVELY TRANQUIL. THOUGH THE AIRPORT OFTEN COMES UNDER FIRE, RESIDENTS PERCEIVE LESS POST-CURFEW FIGHTING THAN LAST YEAR. THE REGIME CELEBRATIONS OF THE FOUR REVOLUTION

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PASSED WITHOUT MAJOR INCIDENT AND INVOLVED CROWDS THREE TIMES LARGER THAN LAST YEAR. THE RESISTANCE APPEARS TO BE ALIVE AND WELL IN RURAL AREAS NEAR JALALABAD, EVEN WHERE MAJOR REGIME OPERATIONS WERE CONDUCTED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.

6. RECENT REPORTS CONFIRM THE HEAVY CIVILIAN DEATH TOLL IN HERAT PROVINCE, THOUGH RESISTANCE CASUALTIES ARE REPORTEDLY LIGHT. AERIAL BOMBING APPEARS TO HAVE CONCENTRATED ON VILLAGES WHERE THE RESISTANCE IS STRONGEST RATHER THAN THE CITY ITSELF. ON MAY 7 REGIME AND SOVIET TROOPS SURROUNDED HERAT AND BEGAN A HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH. REPORTEDLY A FORMER RESISTANCE COMMANDER WHO WENT

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OVER TO THE REGIME THIS SPRING IS BEING USED TO IDENTIFY MUJAH-
IDEEN AMONG THOSE SHEPT UP IN THE SEARCHES. END SUMMARY.

7. KABUL ATMOSPHERICS: KABUL WAS GENERALLY QUITE DURING THE SECOND
WEEK OF MAY, THOUGH ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE COULD OCCASIONALLY
BE HEARD FROM THE DEH SASZ AREA BEYOND THE AIRPORT AND FROM THE
SHOMALI REGION TO THE NORTH. SEVERAL ASSASSINATIONS HAVE ALSO COME
TO OUR ATTENTION. ACCORDING TO A LOCAL SOURCE (PROTECT) THE PRO-
REGIME MALEK (ROUGHLY, "VILLAGE LEADER") OF SHEWAKI, A STRATEGIC
VILLAGE NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE LOGAR VALLEY JUST SOUTH OF KABUL,
WAS GUNNED DOWN BY MUJAHIDEEN MAY 13 WHILE RETURNING FROM THE
MOSQUE TO HIS HOUSE. AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME, AN ARMY OFFICER WAS
ASSASSINATED IN FRONT OF HIS HOME NEAR THE KOTE SANGI NEIGHBORHOOD
IN THE WESTERN EDGE OF THE CAPITAL.

8. THERE WAS A PERCEPTIBLE INCREASE IN REGIME SECURITY MEASURES
LATE IN THE WEEK. BEGINNING THURSDAY MAY 12, REINFORCED REGIME
SECURITY PATROLS (10-12 MEN) WERE SEEN AROUND THE CITY, AND THERE
WERE MORE FREQUENT SEARCHES OF VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS. THE
INCREASED SECURITY MAY HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN THE REGIME-INITIATED
SHOOTING THAT TOOK PLACE NEAR THE PUL-E-KHESHTI MOSQUE (NEAR SHOR
BAZAAR) AT 4:30 P.M. ON FRIDAY MAY 13. ACCORDING TO AN EYEWITNESS
(STRICTLY PROTECT) SOLDIERS FIRED TWO SHOTS WHICH DOWNED A MAN ON
THE CROWDED BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER NEAR THE MOSQUE. WHILE THE
REASON FOR THE SHOOTING WAS NOT EVIDENT, WITHIN A FEW MINUTES
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SECURITY PATROLS CONVERGED ON THE AREA AND BROKE UP THE ANGRY
CROWD WHICH HAD GATHERED.

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

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SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1763

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING

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9. THE REGIME APPEARS TO HAVE REPAIRED AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, THE DAMAGE TO TRANSMISSION LINES CAUSED BY THE RESISTANCE ACTIONS PRIOR AND SUBSEQUENT TO THE REGIME'S CELEBRATION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOVIET REVOLUTION. ON MAY 12 HYDRO-GENERATED POWER REACHED THE CITY AND MOST NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE SINCE RECEIVED POWER THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT.

10. KABUL-JALALABAD ROAD OPENED: AS MENTIONED IN PREVIOUS REPORTS, THE KABUL TO JALALABAD HIGHWAY WAS BLOCKED BY A LANDSLIDE NEAR MAHIPAR AROUND APRIL 22. AS A RESULT OF THE LANDSLIDE, ABOUT TWO HUNDRED METERS OF THE ROAD WAS WASHED OUT OR DANGEROUSLY UNDERCUT. WHILE THERE IS NO CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT THE RESISTANCE PLAYED A ROLE IN CLOSING THE HIGHWAY, SPORADIC AND OCCASIONALLY HEAVY SNIPER FIRE SLOWED THE WORK OF REGIME MAINTENANCE CREWS. ON MAY 5 THE ROAD WAS PASSABLE FOR LIGHT TRAFFIC AND AROUND MAY 9 ONE LANE WAS OPEN FOR HEAVY TRUCKS.

11. WITH THE ARRIVAL OF PRODUCE TRUCKS THE PRICES OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES FROM EASTERN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN HAVE DROPPED IN KABUL, THOUGH THEY REMAIN ABOVE NORMAL LEVELS. THE INTERRUPTION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ALSO HAD ECONOMIC EFFECTS IN JALALABAD. THOUGH THE PRICE OF FRUIT PLUNGED, KEROSENE, DIESEL AND PETROL, WHICH ARE SUPPLIED FROM KABUL, WERE EXPENSIVE AND IN SHORT SUPPLY.

12. JALALABAD: ACCORDING TO RECENT TRAVELLERS, IT APPEARS THAT JALALABAD REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST SECURE CITIES IN AFGHANISTAN. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF OCCASIONAL MORTAR, ROCKET, AND MACHINEGUN
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FIRE DIRECTED AT THE AIRPORT, THE CENTER OF THE TOWN IS LARGELY QUIET AFTER THE 9:00 CURFEW. THE MOST RECENT AIRPORT ATTACK, WHICH REPORTEDLY DAMAGED SEVERAL AIRCRAFT, TOOK PLACE IN LATE APRIL. NIGHT FIGHTING AROUND THE FRINGES OF THE CITY CONTINUES, BUT AT A LOWER LEVEL THAN LAST YEAR. WHILE ASSASSINATIONS OCCUR IN THE CITY, THEY APPEAR TO BE LESS FREQUENT THAN IN KABUL. ACTIVITY IN THE BAZAARS IS NORMAL, THERE ARE FEW SHORTAGES EXCEPT FOR FUEL, AND PRICE INFLATION IS NO WORSE THAN IN KABUL. UNLIKE THE REST OF AFGHANISTAN, THERE ARE FEW INTERRUPTIONS IN THE SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY WHICH IS PROVIDED BY A HYDROELECTRIC PLANT 20 KILOMETERS WEST OF THE CITY.

13. ANOTHER INDICATION OF JALALABAD'S RELATIVE SECURITY CAN BE

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SEEN IN THE SUCCESSFUL STAGING OF THE APRIL 27 CELEBRATIONS OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOUR REVOLUTION. SECURITY MEASURES WERE STRINGENT, ELABORATE AND INCLUDED USING TANKS TO BLOCK OFF THE ROADS LEADING INTO THE CITY. THERE WERE NO MAJOR INCIDENTS, AND THE REGIME WAS SUCCESSFUL IN GATHERING BETWEEN 5,000 AND 6,000 REGIME WORKERS, SCHOOL CHILDREN, AND PARTY CADRES TO THE CENTRAL SQUARE TO LISTEN TO *SPEECHES BY THE ZONAL CHIEF, GARRISON COMMANDER, AND OTHER POPA* LIGHTS. ACCORDING TO RESIDENTS (PROTECT), THE CROWD WAS ABOUT THREE TIMES LARGER THAN ATTENDED LAST YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS.

14. THE AREAS OUTSIDE JALALABAD ARE LESS TRANQUIL. THE KAMA AND BEHSUD DISTRICTS TO THE EAST REMAIN FIRMLY IN MUJAHIDEEN HANDS DESPITE MAJOR REGIME OPERATIONS THERE SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. DURING THOSE OPERATIONS, THE REGIME USED PARATROOPS TO A MUCH GREATER EXTENT THAN PREVIOUSLY. THIS RESULTED IN HIGHER RESISTANCE CASUALTIES WHICH, ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, WERE MORE THAN MATCHED BY THE NUMBER OF PARATROOPS KILLED BEFORE REACHING THE GROUND. EXCEPT FOR SMALL CONSCRIPTION FORAYS, THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO SOVIET/DRA REGIME OPERATIONS UNDERWAY IN THESE DISTRICTS. THE STRONGEST RESISTANCE GROUPS IN THE KAMA AND BEHSUD ARE MOHAMMAD NABI'S HARAKAT-E-INQILAB-E-ISLAMI AND GULBUDDIN HEKMATYAR'S HEZB-E-ISLAMI.

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

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SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1764

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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THE MUJAHIDEEN ALSO REMAIN STRONG IN THE AREAS SOUTHWEST OF THE
CITY SUCH AS THE KHOGIANI VALLEY AND DEH BALA WHERE YUNUS
KHALIS' HEZB-E-ISLAMI FIGHTERS PREDOMINATE. WHILE THE GROUPS WITHIN
JALALABAD CITY APPEAR TO GET ALONG FAIRLY WELL, THERE ARE
OCCASIONAL REPORTS OF INTERNECINE FIGHTING IN THE OUTLYING AREAS,
USUALLY INVOLVING THE HEZB-E-ISLAMI.

15 OUTSIDE OF OCCASIONAL SNIPING JUST EAST OF JALALABAD,
REGIME VEHICLES AND CONVOYS LESS FREQUENTLY COME UNDER ATTACK
THAN NEAR HERAT, KANDAHAR OR GHAZNI. PERHAPS PARTLY BECAUSE THE
FLAT TERRAIN OFFERS LITTLE CONCEALMENT. THERE HAS BEEN AN UPSURGE
OF INCIDENTS IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS IN THE MORE MOUNTAINOUS
COUNTRY NEAR TORKHAM ON THE BORDER. TYPICALLY BUSES, CIVILIAN
VEHICLES AND OCCASIONALLY REGIME VEHICLES ARE DIVERTED FROM THE
HIGHWAY AT GUNPOINT, THE OCCUPANTS QUESTIONED FOR TIES WITH THE
REGIME, AND OCCASIONALLY RELIEVED OF MONEY OR GOODS. WHILE SOME OF
THESE INCIDENTS INVOLVE RESISTANCE GROUPS, THERE ALSO APPEARS TO
BE A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF FREE-LANCE BANDITRY.

16. THE SHOMALI: THE AGONY CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE WEEK FOR THE
INHABITANTS OF THE ONCE RICH SHOMALI REGION, STRETCHING NORTH
FROM KABUL TO THE HINDU KUSH. WE HAVE FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF LAST
WEEK'S REPORT THAT MOST INHABITED AREAS IN THE SOUTHERN
HALF OF THE SHOMALI, INCLUDING SHAKARDARA, ISTALEF, THE VILLAGES
IN THE GULDARA VALLEY, AND KALAKAN WERE SUBJECTED TO UNPRECE-
DENTED LEVELS OF AERIAL BOMBARDMENT IN LATE APRIL AND EARLY MAY.
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IN ISTALEF FORTY HOUSES WERE DESTROYED AND RESIDENTS (PROTECT)
FEAR THAT OVER 50 CIVILIANS WERE KILLED OR SEVERLY WOUNDED. THE
LARGER SETTLEMENT OF KALAKAN; JUST EAST OF THE HIGHWAY ABOUT HALF
WAY BETWEEN KABUL AND CHARIKAR, WAS EVEN MORE EXTENSIVELY DAMAGED.
ACCORDING TO A RECENT VISITOR (STRICTLY PROTECT), FEW STRUCTURES
REMAIN STANDING.

17. AERIAL BOMBING APPEARS TO HAVE CEASED, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY,
AROUND MAY 12. SPORADIC DAY AND NIGHT HEAVY CALIBER ARTILLERY
BOMBARDMENT OF FIELDS AND VILLAGES CONTINUES AND WE HAVE HEARD
SEVERAL CREDIBLE STORIES OF VILLAGERS BEING SHOT WHILE ATTEMPTING

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TO WORK THEIR ORCHARDS. ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 13 HEAVY SHELLING IN THE SHOMALI COULD BE HEARD IN KABUL. AS OF MAY 14, THERE APPEAR TO BE NO LARGE SCALE OPERATIONS BEING MOUNTED IN THE SOUTHERN SHOMALI, NOR HAVE WE HEARD OF ANY ACCOUNTS OF SIGNIFICANT MUJAHIDEEN RESISTANCE. THERE ARE FRAGMENTARY REPORTS OF MORE ACTIVE RESISTANCE NEAR CHARIKAR BY JAMIAT-E-ISLAMI FIGHTERS LOYAL TO PANJSHER VALLEY LEADER MAS'UD, BUT THESE HAVE NOT BEEN CONFIRMED.

18. THE HIGHWAY THROUGH THE SHOMALI TO THE NORTH REMAINS OPEN TO COMMERCIAL AND BUS TRAFFIC. RECENT TRAVELLERS (PROTECT) SAY THERE APPEARS TO BE NO MAJOR INCREASE IN THE NUMBERS OF SOVIET ARMOR AND TROOPS VISIBLE FROM THE HIGHWAY. HOWEVER, BUSES ARE OFTEN STOPPED BY SOVIET SOLDIERS SELLING KEROSENE, DIESEL AND LOOTED HOUSEHOLD GOODS FROM THE BACKS OF TRUCKS. HASHISH APPEARS TO BE FAVORED BY THE SOLDIERS THOUGH MONEY IS ACCEPTABLE.

19. HERAT: WE HAVE RECEIVED A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE DRA/SOVIET OPERATION IN HERAT PROVINCE SOMEWHAT AT VARIANCE WITH LAST WEEK'S REPORT. THE SOURCE CONFIRMS THAT CIVILIAN CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY HIGH. HOWEVER, THE BRUNT OF THE AERIAL BOMBARDMENT WAS BORNE BY THE VILLAGES SURROUNDING HERAT, PARTICULARLY THOSE TO THE NORTHWEST, RATHER THAN THE CITY ITSELF.

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

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SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1765

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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AMEMBASSY DHAKA

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DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR NEA/PAS - MRS. OAKLEY; THE HAGUE ALSO FOR A-DAM AND R-DAM.

20. ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, ON MAY 7, A FEW DAYS AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT OF VILLAGES TO THE NORTHWEST OF HERAT STOPPED, REGIME AND SOVIET TROOPS SURROUNDED THE CITY AND BEGAN CONDUCTING AN INTENSIVE HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH. CAPTAIN GHULAM RASUL, A FORMER ARMY OFFICER WHO HAD BEEN A MAJOR RESISTANCE COMMANDER BEFORE DEFECTING TO THE REGIME EARLIER THIS SPRING, WAS BEING USED TO IDENTIFY MUJAHIDEEN AMONG THE MEN BEING ROUNDED UP. RASUL, WHO HAS BEEN LIVING IN THE REGIME'S 17TH DIVISION HEADQUARTERS IN HERAT, WAS UNDER UNDERSTANDABLY HEAVY MILITARY ESCORT AS HE TURNED IN HIS FORMER COMRADES IN ARMS.

21. THE SOURCE SAID THE BOMBARDMENT OF VILLAGES TO THE NORTHWEST OF HERAT WHERE THE RESISTANCE WAS BASED, HAD BEEN PROLONGED AND INTENSE. THE STRIKES AGAINST THE NORTHWESTERN AREAS HAD INVOLVED DAILY SORTIES BY MANY HELICOPTERS AND FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT. THOUGH THE NUMBER OF CIVILIAN DEATHS WAS SAID TO BE EXTREMELY HIGH, RESISTANCE CASUALTIES WERE REPORTEDLY LIGHT. THE BOMBARDMENT ENDED FOLLOWING THE DECISION OF THE RESISTANCE COMMANDER, QARI YEK DAST (QARI ONE-ARM), WHO WAS FORMERLY THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY TO GHULAM RASUL, TO PULL HIS FORCES BACK FARTHER TO THE NORTHWEST AWAY FROM THE CITY.

22. THE SOURCE SAID THAT THE DEFECTION OF GHULAM RASUL WAS A MAJOR TRIUMPH FOR THE REGIME'S INTELLIGENCE SERVICES. ALTHOUGH A SUNNI MUSLIM FROM HERAT PROVINCE, RASUL HAD REPRESENTED THE HARAKAT-E-ISLAMI, WHOSE LEADER, SHEIKH MOHAMMAD ASEF KANDAHARI, IS A SHIA WHO MAKES HIS HEADQUARTERS IN THE IRANIAN HOLY CITY OF
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QOM. THE HARAKAT-E-ISLAMI, THE SOURCE ASSERTED, WAS THE MOST POWERFUL RESISTANCE GROUP IN HERAT AND HAD PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN FASHIONING THE RELATIVELY GOOD COOPERATION THAT CURRENTLY MARKS THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MUJAHIDEEN IN HERAT. QARI YEK DAST ALSO BELONGS TO THE HARAKAT-E-ISLAMI AS DOES ANOTHER WELL KNOWN HERAT RESISTANCE LEADER, CAPTAIN ISMAIL. DESPITE RASUL'S DEFECTION, THE SOURCE INSISTED THAT NONE OF THE MUJAHIDEEN WHO HAD FOLLOWED HIM HAD JOINED HIM IN CHANGING SIDES.

23. THE NORTH: A TRAVELLER FROM NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN HAS PROVIDED INFORMATION ON THE REGIME'S STRENGTH IN THE AREA BETWEEN HAZAR-E-SHARIF AND MAIMANA. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE (PROTECT) THERE IS

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A HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF REGIME AND SOVIET FORCES AT SHEBERGHAN 120 KILOMETERS EAST OF MAZAR-E-SHARIF WHICH ASSURES THE CONTINUED FLOW OF NATURAL GAS FROM THE FIELDS SOUTH OF SHEBERGHAN TO THE SOVIET UNION. IN AQCHA BETWEEN SHEBERGHAN AND MAZAR, THERE IS A MUCH SMALLER CONTINGENT OF REGIME TROOPS WHICH MAINTAINS THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER BUT WHOSE PRESENCE IS REGULARLY CONTESTED BY THE RESISTANCE. IN ANDKHOI 75 KILOMETERS NORTHWEST OF SHEBERGHAN AND CLOSE TO THE SOVIET BORDER, THERE IS A GARRISON OF SEVERAL HUNDRED SOVIET AND REGIME TROOPS WHICH IS NOT ACTIVE BUT WHICH IS TOO STRONG FOR THE RESISTANCE TO ATTACK REGULARLY.

24. THE TOWN OF DAULATABAD 65 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF ANDKHOI HAS BEEN A CONTINUING PROBLEM FOR THE REGIME. THE REGIME IS UNABLE TO MAINTAIN A REGULAR PRESENCE AND THE MOLESWAL IS OFTEN FORCED TO SEEK REFUGE ELSEWHERE. THE WELL KNOWN JAMIAT-E-ISLAMI COMMANDER, MULLAH QARA, MAKES HIS HEADQUARTERS IN OR NEAR THE TOWN AND MAKES LAND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SHEBERGHAN AND POINTS WEST EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR THE REGIME. COMMANDERS LIKE MULLAH QARA HAVE MADE THE JAMIAT THE DOMINANT RESISTANCE GROUP IN MOST AREAS OF NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN. FINALLY, THERE IS A SOLID REGIME PRESENCE IN MAINANA, 120 KILOMETERS SOUTHWEST OF SHEBERGHAN, BUT THE GARRISON THERE CANNOT MOVE AT WILL AROUND THE TOWN AND IS RESUPPLIED FOR THE MOST PART BY AIR.

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